DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 265 689 EC 181 379

AUTHOR Swartz, Stanley L.; Swartz, Janet M.
TITLE Counseling the Disabled Reader.
PUB DATE Nov 85
NOTE 11p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Illinois Council for Exceptional Children (Chicago, IL, November, 1985).
PUB TYPE Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Reports - Descriptive (141)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Classroom Techniques; Consultation Programs; *Counseling Techniques; Elementary Education; Interpersonal Competence; *Reading Achievement; *Reading Difficulties; Self Concept

ABSTRACT

The effects of a multifaceted counseling program on 22 elementary students enrolled in a remedial reading program were examined. The program featured individual and group counseling, large group exercises, and teacher support and consultation. Individual sessions incorporated play therapy techniques, group counseling involved directed interaction among group members and role playing, whole class sessions focused on social awareness and positive self-images, while consultation emphasized classroom management and alternative strategies for assisting problem children. (Author/CL)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION
CENTER (ERIC)
☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

ED265689

Counseling the Disabled Reader

Stanley L. Swartz
Western Illinois University
and
Janet M. Swartz
Macomb Community Schools

Illinois Association for Counseling and Development

November 1985

EC181379

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Stanley L. Swartz
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

ABSTRACT

The effects of a multifaceted counseling program on students enrolled in a remedial reading program are reported. The use of individual and group counseling, large group exercises, and teacher support and consultation and their relation to the objectives of the counseling program are discussed. Growth in reading achievement and emotional variables are reported.

Research has demonstrated that students experiencing difficulty in reading also exhibit various emotional problems (Simonds, 1974). Though some have demonstrated emotional variables as antecedents of reading problems (Wattenberg & Clifford, 1964), the question of emotional maladjustment as a cause or effect of reading disability continues to be debated. Even without clear evidence regarding this question, it is certain that an effective treatment program will include strategies for both reading problems and emotional variables. Only programs addressing both problem areas are likely to be successful (Abrams, 1971).

A variety of counseling techniques have been used in conjunction with remedial reading programs. Both nondirective (Thayer, 1970) and behavioral approaches (Hartup & Longee, 1975) have been used with success.

The purpose of this study was to report the effects of a multifaceted counseling program on both emotional adjustment and reading achievement. The counseling services described were added to an existing remedial reading program on an experimental basis with the hope that reading achievement and overall individual emotional state would be positively affected.

METHOD

Sample

Students attending three elementary schools, qualified for Chapter I remedial reading services, comprised the sample pool. The sample of 22 students consisted of those who met one or more of the following referral criteria:

1. unexplained achievement deficits.

2. inadequate adjustment to classroom instructional activities.

3. emotional or behavioral problems interfering with academic performance.

4. disrupted family or personal circumstances affecting academic performance.

Procedure

A variety of strategies were employed to impact children experiencing academic difficulty generally and reading problems specifically. Each effort was designed to enhance self-concept and facilitate adjustment to the instructional process.

Individual sessions were scheduled for those children whose emotional or behavioral problems were judged to be most severe. Play therapy was chosen as the primary therapeutic medium because the process is both non-threatening and non-confrontational so that communication in therapy proceeds through both verbal symbolism (language) and nonverbal symbolism (play) toward conflict resolution and emotional growth.

Group counseling sessions were used when small groups of children were experiencing similar problems and were judged capable of working in and benefiting from peer relationships. Directed interaction among group members and role-playing were the primary methods used in this setting.

Whole class sessions were conducted on a weekly basis. Materials specifically designed for large group work were used. Developing Understanding of Self and Others (DUSO) (Dinkmeyer & Dinkmeyer, 1982), which helps children understand social and emotional behavior by encouraging them to develop positive self-image and become more aware of relationships between themselves and others, was used for grades K-3. Toward Affective Development (TAD) (Dupont, Gardner & Brody, 1974), which is designed to stimulate psychological and affective development by exploring feelings, interests, aspirations and conflicts, was used for grades 4-6.

Consultation was provided to both remedial reading and regular classroom teachers. Overall classroom management and alternative strategies for assisting problem children were emphasized. Various materials were made available for classroom use that addressed problems that children have and how to work with their feelings about problems.

Pre and post test data on all instruments were collected in September and May respectively. Data on emotional variables included those measured by the Self-Concept and Motivation Inventory (Milchus, 1968) and the Goodenough-Harris Drawing Test (Goodenough & Harris, 1963). Reading achievement scores were collected using the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Tests (MacGinitie, 1978).

RESULTS

Table 1 includes both pre and post test data for the SCAMIN (Self-Concept and Motivation Inventory) for those children who received either individual or small group counseling services. Though not entirely stable for young children, the SCAMIN can provide useful planning data on motivation and self-concept for designing counseling sessions.

Though considerable individual variation is evident in this data, some group trends are noteworthy. An overall increase was seen in three of the four subparts. Achievement Needs (the regard with which the child perceives the rewards of learning), Role Expectations (the positive acceptance of the demands made by others), and Self Adequacy (view of present and future probabilities of success), all increased for the overall group. These increases represent desirable growth. Achievement Investment (awareness and concern regarding failure) decreased for the overall group. Since this subpart measures an undesirable trait, this decrease is also considered desirable growth.

The combination of Role Expectancy and Self Adequacy scores represents the Self-Concept score. This overall increase represents successful impact in one of the areas targeted by the counseling service. The overall Motivation score (the combination of Achievement Need and Investment) did not show a similar increase.

Additional data was collected on each student using the Goodenough-Harris Drawing Test. Table 2 includes pre and post test scores for man and woman drawings. The Goodenough-Harris is basically a test of intellectual maturity with indicators of both overall ability and self-concept.

Table 2 shows considerable individual variation in percentile ranks for both drawings of a man and woman. However, ranks for the overall group showed mean score change from pre to post test for man drawings to be from the 9th percentile to the 33rd percentile. Mean change for woman drawings was 6th percentile to 23rd percentile.

Table 3 shows reading achievement scores. Both 83-84 and 84-85 pre and post test data for the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Tests are reported. Reading achievement scores showed growth for both school years.

Table 1

SCAMIN Stanine Scores for Students Receiving Individual and Small Group Counseling

Student	Achievement Need		Achievement Investment		Role Expectation		Self Adequacy	
	pre	post	pre	post	pre	post	pre	post
1	4	7	7	2	4	4	1	9
2	3	3	4	4	5	5	4	3
3	2	7	7	4	5	7	5	8
4	4	4	8	6	6	6	2	6
5	4	4	8	6	5	6	2	6
6	3	4	4	1	8	8	7	7
7	5	6	4	3	3	7	2	7
8	2	7	7	2	4	9	4	4
9	8	8	2	2	1	9	2	5
10	5	7	5	4	1	5	4	8
11	9	9	8	2	7	9	5	8
12	5	6	7	1	2	2	3	3
13	4	5	7	2	7	9	3	9
14	5	5	5	5	3	5	3	7
15	7	7	7	7	4	4	3	3
16	3	6	6	5	4	4	2	6
17	9	9	2	1	6	9	7	9
18	4	5	4	3	3	4	1	5
19	3	4	2	2	5	9	6	8
20	1	3	2	3	1	4	1	6
21	3	6	9	8	1	4	1	3
22	5	7	8	8	1	4	1	4
Mean	4.5	5.9	5.6	3.7	3.9	6.0	3.1	6.1
Standard Deviation	2.2	1.8	2.3	2.2	2.2	2.3	1.9	2.1

Table 2

Percentile Scores for the Drawing Test
for Students Receiving Counseling

Student	man %rank		woman %rank	
	pre	post	pre	post
1	5	14	5	14
2	25	42	18	32
3	16	16	3	5
4	21	32	2	21
5	5	55	5	29
6	2	15	7	*
7	2	15	2	5
8	5	42	21	47
9	*	55	*	10
10	8	*	5	*
11	5	12	5	12
12	5	19	2	21
13	*	32	8	14
14	4	39	2	14
15	7	16	5	14
16	7	16	5	14
17	4	84	4	14
18	*	98	*	90
19	42	50	12	61
20	2	10	2	7
21	5	14	5	*
22	5	19	7	16
Mean	9.2	33.1	6.3	23.2
Standard Deviation	10.2	24.4	5.2	21.6

* data not available

Table 3

Grade Equivalents on the Gates-MacGinitie for Students Receiving Counseling

Student	Reading Scores - Grade Equivalents 1983-84 pre	1983-84 post	1984-85 pre	1984-85 post
1	*	*	1.2	1.7
2	1.5	2.5	1.7	3.6
3	1.0	1.9	1.7	3.4
4	1.3	3.3	1.8	4.0
5	1.3	1.8	2.0	3.6
6	1.7	2.9	2.4	3.9
7	3.0	4.0	3.8	4.6
8	*	*	*	1.9
9	*	*	1.7	2.5
10	*	*	*	*
11	*	*	*	*
12	2.4	3.8	3.6	4.7
13	2.2	2.7	2.8	3.4
14	*	*	2.9	4.4
15	*	*	3.0	2.8
16	*	*	*	*
17	*	*	4.6	6.2
18	*	*	*	*
19	*	*	1.6	1.8
20	*	*	2.9	3.8
21	*	*	*	*
22	2.1	3.9	2.8	4.3
Mean	1.8	3.0	2.5	3.6
Standard Deviation	.64	.83	.94	1.2

* data not available

DISCUSSION

Reading achievement and emotional variables data were not reported for all students receiving remedial reading services. The data reported represented the most difficult or troubled students in the program. Modest growth or stability are realistic goals for this population. Both emotional and achievement growth for this group were demonstrated in this study.

Because this study was descriptive and no control opportunities were available, the standard of proof in the traditional sense has not been met. However, basically stable growth in a known failure category of children is no small evidence of the efficacy of counseling efforts with reading disabled students. The addition of counseling services as an integral part of remedial reading programs can be justified on the demonstrated growth patterns alone.

The products of a counseling support system to children with reading difficulties and emotional problems and their teachers are difficult to quantify and measure. That such a system enhances reading achievement, school adjustment and emotional growth has been demonstrated in numerous studies and confirmed by the results of this study.

Authors: Stanley L. Swartz, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Special Education, Western Illinois University.
Janet M. Swartz, M.Ed., Counselor, Macomb Community Schools.

REFERENCES

Abrams, J. Emotional resistances to reading. Journal of the reading specialist, 1971, 5, pp. 191-196.

Dinkmeyer, D., & Dinkmeyer, D., Jr. Developing Understanding of Self and Others-Revised. American Guidance Service, 1982.

Dupont, H., Gardner, O., & Brody, D. Toward Affective Development. American Guidance Service, 1974.

Goodenough, F., & Harris, D. The Goodenough-Harris Drawing Test. Harcourt, Brace & World, 1963.

Hartup, W., & Longee, M. Peers as models. School Psychology Digest, 1975, 4, pp. 11-21.

MacGinitie, W. The Gates-MacGinitie Reading Tests. Houghton Mifflin, 1978.

Milchus, N., Farrah, G., & Reitz, W. The Self-Concept and Motivation Inventory. Person-o-metrics, Inc., 1968.

Simonds, J. Relationship between children's learning disorders and emotional disorders at a mental health clinic. Journal of clinical psychology, 1974, 30, pp. 450-458.

Thayer, A. Johnny could read-What happened? Journal of reading, 1970, 13, pp. 501-506.

Wattenberg, W., & Clifford, C. Relation of self-concepts to beginning achievement in reading. Child Development, 1964, 35, pp. 461-467.